AMENDMENT

It is respectfully requested that the specification and claims be amended without prejudice, as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended) A method to monitor the response of a patient being treated for cancer to the ~~by administering~~ administration of a small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor, comprising the steps of:

(a) determining the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of one or more proteins~~ in a first biological sample taken from the patient prior to treatment with the small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor;

(b) determining the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in at least a second biological sample taken from the patient subsequent to the treatment with the small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor; and

(c) comparing the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the second biological sample with the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the first biological sample;

wherein the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~protein expression is assessed by immunohistochemistry and wherein a change in the level of expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the second biological sample compared to the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the first biological sample indicates the response of the patient being treated for cancer to ~~efficacy of the treatment with~~ the small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor.

2-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said cancer is selected from lung cancer, renal cancer, pancreatic cancer, liver cancer, gastrointestinal cancer, thyroid cancer, ovarian cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, and melanoma.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said sample is a tumor biopsy.

7-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently amended) A method for identifying whether a ~~discovering novel~~ candidate small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor is effective in treating ~~for the treatment of~~ cancer, comprising the steps of:

(a) determining the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of one or more proteins~~ in a first tumor cell sample obtained from a cancer patient prior to treatment with a candidate small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor;

(b) determining the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in at least a second tumor cell sample obtained from a cancer patient subsequent to the treatment with the candidate small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor; and

(c) comparing the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the second tumor cell sample with the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the first tumor cell sample;

wherein the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~protein expression~~ is assessed by immunohistochemistry and wherein a change in the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the second tumor cell sample compared to the phosphorylation level of pERK ~~expression of the one or more proteins~~ in the first tumor cell sample ~~indicates the efficacy of the candidate~~ identifies a small molecule Raf kinase inhibitor that is effective in

treating cancer.

16-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said tumor cells are selected from lung cancer, renal cancer, pancreatic cancer, liver cancer, gastrointestinal cancer, thyroid cancer, ovarian cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, and melanoma.

19-25. (Cancelled)